CHAPTER X

LEGISLATIVE POWER[1]

PRECURSORS OF THE PRESENT LEGISLATIVE BODY

THE immediate predecessors of the National Assembly of the Commonwealth of the Philippines were the Philippine Commission, the Philippine Assembly, and the Philippine Legislature. Combined they form a splendid background of legislative experience for the present law-making body.

The Philippine Commission came on the scene of its future activities with no guide of any sort, except the McKinley-Root Instructions, which were of a general character, and with but one Commissioner acquainted with local conditions. That under such handicaps the Philippine Commission was able to perform so well the legislative part of its program, in conjunction with the executive duties of its members, was a credit to American adaptability, initiative, and industry.

The Philippine Commission was organized as an appointive body with exclusive legislative authority over the entire archipelago. It thus remained until the establishment of the Philippine Assembly, with which it divided authority in the so-called Christian region. In the early days not only was the Philippine Commission a unicameral body, but it was a commission in fact as well as in name. With the exception of three Filipino Commissioners without portfolios, the

remaining
Commissioners were the American heads of executive depart-

[1] **This** chapter was read by two prominent members of the House of Representatives, Philippine Legislature, one of whom did not endorse the statements contained therein, and the other of whom found the chapter "excellent and accurate in every detail."